

who should be concerned with that child's welfare rather than inflicting that kind of harm.

Regrettably, far too many families are simply incapable of raising children without resorting to abuse. The end result is that the child often learns violence as an acceptable way to convey one's feelings and release stress. Thus, the patterns of abuse usually continue with future generations.

In addition to the physical harm imparted on the child from sexual abuse, there is psychological damage which often lasts long into adulthood, affecting the child's future adult relationships.

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Even worse, sexual abuse robs a child of his or her innocence long before that innocence should be taken away. And whereas many adults who physically abuse their children can, with the help of extensive counseling, overcome their problems and the dangerous patterns of behavior, that same success does not usually occur with sexual abusers.

All too often, sexual predators of children repeat their acts of abuse even after being punished for earlier actions. Those individuals need to either be deterred from committing their acts or effectively punished for their behavior.

So I want to commend my colleagues, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EWING), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES), for bringing this measure to the floor at this time.

I ask my colleagues to support this measure.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume only to say to all of my colleagues who have appeared here this afternoon that I thank them for coming out in support of our resolution. We look forward to the same support on the CAPE Act when it comes to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to close and say certainly it has been a great pleasure to work with the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the other sponsors of this resolution.

Obviously, as this month is Child Abuse Prevention Month, we certainly are encouraged to see the increased effort that Congress will make, that we can make at this national level to work with local folks, work with law enforcement, with health care, with faith communities, as well as all parts of our local communities, to ensure that we provide a safer place for our children, that we continue to increase the awareness of this problem, that we can, as the future goes on, do a better job in making sure that our children are safe.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution calling for public and

private resources to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Children are our most precious gifts. We are responsible for their education, their safety, their health, and their lives. We should do everything we can to protect our children and ensure that their lives are safe from harm.

Yet, a sad truth remains that not all children are free from abuse and neglect. In 1997 alone, more than 1 million cases of child abuse and neglect were confirmed by child protective service agencies in the United States. One million children confirmed.

If that statistic wasn't disturbing enough, we know what the results of childhood abuse and neglect can be. We know that abused and neglected children do not perform as well in school. In some cases, physical abuse of children can result in brain damage, cerebral palsy, and learning disorders.

Perhaps most troubling of all, we know that there is a vicious cycle surrounding child abuse. Adults abused as children are at higher risk of arrest for sex crimes.

By recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, we alert communities all over our country to this tragic social illness that hurts our most precious and vulnerable resource. We recognize that child abuse is a complex problem. The solution requires action from everyone in each city and state. We need to support and expand local officials' efforts to prevent abuse. We need religious leaders to lend a supportive and understanding voice for families. We need to also support programs for families that prepare individuals for the job of parenting.

Most importantly, by recognizing Child Abuse Prevention Month, we also tell victims of child abuse that they are not forgotten. We see you and we will help you. We must remember that truly effective prevention efforts must include treatment for children who have been abused or neglected.

The lingering anguish we feel toward the tragedy in Littleton, Colorado captures how we feel when our children are harmed. We need to break this cycle and prevent child abuse from ever occurring.

I urge my colleagues to support Representative PRYCE's resolution that calls on a collective effort to raise awareness and prevent child abuse and neglect in our communities. I want to thank Representative PRYCE for her work on this important issue.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Mrs. PRYCE's Resolution. This month is Child Abuse Prevention Month and I am pleased to be able to support this resolution which commemorates those who are helping to alleviate the evils of child abuse and neglect.

Together, we can make a difference, one child at a time.

I recently learned about the life of one child and the difference she felt in her life. Three years ago, Shannon was a 16-year-old girl suffering from neglect and despair. She never knew her father. Her sister had been taken away by the state and placed in foster care. Her brother was in state prison for attempted murder. And her mother couldn't seem to help her.

Shannon wasn't interested in life. She was depressed, in and out of psychiatric care between suicide attempts. She was failing in school.

Shannon needed a home. And thanks to the dedication of some very special people at Our

Children's Homestead in my Congressional District, that's exactly what Shannon was given.

And what difference did it make? Today Shannon attends College. She plans to go into hotel management.

When she looks back to high school, Shannon sees A's and B's on her report cards; she looks at photos of herself in the sports section of the yearbook; she sees herself on stage at the prom—a member of the prom court.

Shannon is blessed.

But we must also remember how much more we need to do.

In 1992, less than 30,000 children in Illinois were removed from their homes and placed into the child welfare system because they were victims of severe abuse and neglect. Just last year, that number had increased to over 50,000. That's more than a 66 percent increase in only six years. Each one of those numbers may be another Shannon. A child who needs our help—literally needs our help—to survive.

As the numbers of children in need comes close to doubling, we must redouble our efforts to help them. I rise to commemorate the work of those who have done so much. As Shannon's story tells us, we can make a difference for children—one at a time.

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the concurrent resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 93.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL HOSPITAL WEEK

(Mr. GOODE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, the week of May 9 is National Hospital Week, when communities across the country celebrate the health care workers, volunteers, and other health professionals. This year's theme for National Hospital Week is "People Care, Miracles Happen."

A great example of this theme is an event called Martha's Market at Martha Jefferson Hospital in Charlottesville, Virginia. Martha's Market is a weekend event that transforms an indoor tennis facility into a shopping plaza with 40 unique boutique vendors. The event began as a fund-raiser by a group of enthusiastic volunteers who wanted to raise awareness of breast cancer, and it won the American Hospital Association's prestigious Hospital Award for Volunteer Excellence.